

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 09436 101445Z

46

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-07 SP-03 SS-20 RSC-01 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 PRS-01 DRC-01 /065 W

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R 101233Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4032

CINCPAC HAWAII

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 9436

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS : PFOR, TH

SUBJECT : AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE

REF: STATE 119164

1. ON JUNE 10, I PAID A COURTESY CALL ON GENERAL KRUEN SUTHANINT, MINISTER OF DEFENSE IN THE SECOND SANYA GOVERNMENT. IN LIGHT OF THE EXTENSIVE DEALING THAT THE EMBASSY HAS WITH THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE ON VARIOUS ISSUES STEMMING FROM THE U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THAILAND, I FELT THAT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO ESTABLISH A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH MINISTER KRUEN. THIS GOAL WAS ACHIEVED AS THE MINISTER PROMISED THAT HE AND HIS SENIOR COLLEAGUES WOULD CONTINUE TO CONSULT WITH THE EMBASSY ON ALL PROBLEMS INVOLVING COMMON DEFENSE INTERESTS.

2. MINISTER KRUEN STUDIOUSLY AVOIDED ANY SUBSTANTATIVE COMMENTS DURING THE AMBASSADOR'S COURTESY CALL CLAIMING THAT HE WAS NOT YET SUFFICIENTLY FAMILIAR WITH HIS NEW RESPONSIBILITIES. HOWEVER, THE FOLLOWING BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION WAS DEVELOPED: KRUEN VISITED THAI FORCES IN KOREA TWO TIMES; THE LAST TIME IN 1966. HE VISITED FRANCE IN 1957. KRUEN ALSO VISITED THE UNITED STATES TOPPING FORT SILL, FORT BENNING, FORT KNOX AND FORT BLISS. HE ESPECIALLY ENJOYED A SHORT TRIP ACROSS THE BORDER TO JUAREZ EVEN THOUGH HIS GROUP WAS PROTECTED BY FIVE POLICEMEN FROM JUAREZ'S FABLED PICKPOCKETS.

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PAGE 02 BANGKO 09436 101445Z

KRUEN IS AN AVID GOLFER. KRUEN IS ESPECIALLY PROUD OF THE

GOOD FRIENDSHIPS HE HAS HAD WITH MANY AMERICAN MILITARY OFFICERS, EXPECIALLY GENERAL BLACKSHEAR BRYAN WHOM HE KNEW AS USARPAC AND FIRST ARMY COMMANDER AND GENERAL WILLIAM PALMER WHOM HE MET IN KOREA.

3. CONTRARY TO REFTTEL, KRUEEN SPEAKS ALMOST NO ENGLISH. IT IS NECESSARY TO CONVERSE WITH HIM THROUGH AN INTERPRETER. DEPARTMENT BIOGRAPHIC REPORTERS MIGHT WISH TO CONTACT GENERAL BLACKSHEAR BRYAN FOR HIS COMMENTS ON GENERAL KRUEEN. ACCORDING TO EMBASSY RECORDS, BRYAN IS LIVING IN RETIREMENT AT 2941 CEDAR LANE, FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA.

4. COMMENT: KRUEEN WAS AFFABLE AND OBVIOUSLY HAS FOND MEMORIES OF HIS TRIPS TO THE U.S. AND HIS ACQUAINTANCE WITH AMERICAN OFFICERS. HE SEEMS IN GOOD HEALTH FOR A PERSON OF 75. I HAD THE DISTINCT IMPRESSION, HOWEVER, THAT HE IS NOT DEEPLY INTERESTED IN SUBSTANTIVE MATTERS. HE IS NOT LIKELY TO MAKE WAVES, AND THAT'S PROBABLY EXACTLY WHY HE WAS APPOINTED TO HIS PRESENT POST.
KINTNER

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